

Halo - Last Stand

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Summary: Halo: Last Stand - As the front line of war edges closer, one family reunites one last time. Who will survive as the Covenant appear with a force that threatens all who stand in their way. Who will stand up against this threat and make the ultimate sacrifice, this is the Last Stand

Halo - Last Stand

****Halo â€| Last Stand****

"Goodmorning, this is the morning edition of channel 12 news, on this mornings edition we go live to Saint Chamberlands Hospital where the latest injured solders have just arrived from battle". Captain Julius Fraser looked over to the display on his table in his private quarters, "Hmmmmmm, another battle that the brass say we have won but in reality it is a loss", "This morning another wave of incoming injured came from the front lines of Sierra Beta, this comes to a total of 3000 this month, the never ending stream of injured is putting a serious strain on our medical system with some of the basic meds running low, the UNSC is ordering all medical clinics to only provide to the public as needed otherwise divert all meds stocks back to the hospitals to ensure their injured can be sent back to the lines to continue the fight, Chamberland Hospital Director"... Julius switches the display off and walks over to the window in his quarters, outside he can look down on Ferros and the Naval Yards, Battle Group Victor slowly slides into view, all 38 remaining ships dented and battle worn, breaches in a few ships are being repaired, plasma scars trace across UNSC Ultimatum as if the ship was a person who just had major surgery, they all just docked that very morning bringing in those injured, it was fierce and both sides suffered heavy casualties but it was a victory at a cost, all 12 covenant ships destroyed with a loss of 20 of our own.

Captain Julius Fraser, captain of the Destroyer UNSC Raven, born april 22nd 2499, now aged 51 was born on the planet Ferros located in the Ferros system. Both his parents died when he was young leaving

him in the care of child services until he was 18 when he then enlisted into the UNSC and began his career becoming Captain at the age of 40, he married his school friend Janet when he was 23 who soon gave birth to twins, a boy Lucas Fraser and a girl Caroline Fraser. Janet went into media and soon became the most wanted news reporter all over Ferros, her reporting skills were unmatched and were what a failing channel 12 needed to boost ratings. Janet became the head field reporter covering the most devastating news including the Innies bombing of the national bank in 2539 and the ongoing human - covenant war. At the age of 18 Lucas Fraser followed his dad and joined the UNSC but as a Marine, he first saw battle when he was 21 and continues to serve. Caroline Fraser at the age of 18 signed up in Saint Chamberlands Hospital as a trainee nurse, her reasons "so many gave their lives so we can survive, I want to do my part to help the survivors live to see another tomorrow."

"Captain, you have an important message, it is directed to your computer" "Who is it?" "The admiral I think" "oh really? I wonder what he has to say this time" Julius sighs and walks back to his desk picking up a drink on the way and opens his computer, Admiral Lord Hood appears on the screen. "Captain Fraser congrats on a victory but I am concerned about the losses, what the hell happened out there?" "Covenant showed their ugly faces again, 12 ships total, we stopped them but we lost 20, I spent hours picking up survivors from life pods and off the planet surface of Sierra Beta, the Covenant landed troops down there and we dropped the ODSs to defend alpha base, honestly Sir, we should have left that backwater dump of a moon, we have not used it for what...20 odd years so why protect it and waste so many lives?" "It was ONI, I have no idea why but they wanted it defended, you guys were the closest so you had to go, I asked questions but you know ONI, they will piss on your garden and still won't say why" "yeah...but...oh forget it, we never get a thank you for saving their asses, it pisses me off" "Take some time off, give your crews some R and R for a few days, I hear the battle group needs repairs and there is a resupply fleet incoming in 2 days to replenish all your ammo, your wife is down there?" "yes she is and my daughter" "go and see them Julius, have a break, you been in that damned chair for far too long, sit there any longer your ass might be stuck there forever". Julius looks over at the photo above his bed "yes sir, talk later".

"Welcome to the Observatory, this space station is linked to Jericho City on Ferros by a space elevator..." Julius walks past a AI giving the usual intro speech and continues to platform 5, there is a long line of people, civilians and servicemen and women alike all wanting to go ground side, everybody is watching the large screens that are playing the local tv shows, trivia and documentaries, anything to keep peoples minds off the reality that plays out in solar systems only weeks away, the reality of war. "5 hour trip down the lift, well that is nice I hope they serve tea on the way" mutters Julius to himself, "no food allowed" says the same avi but now on a hologram projector near the lift "unless you want to wash out the cabin when you decide to paint the inside when the gravity goes back to normal, the other passengers won't take it nicely either" The doors open and the line of people all move forward taking up the seats inside, Julius takes a seat and looks out the window, just outside at the refit station the UNSC Raven is getting breaches repaired and her name is getting a new coat of paint. The cargo holds are open wide and shuttles are buzzing around like mad bees all filled with their precious cargo, MAC rounds and Archer Missiles, Julius sees a Pelican

hanging back with a escort of fighters...on board is the Shiva Missiles. " Damn she is a hungry beast, with all that ammo going in her, I would hate to be in a battle and she runs out" The doors close and the lift starts to decend picking up speed, the Observatory and Naval Yards grow smaller as the lift makes its way to the planet. "Im coming home" thinks Julius in his head as he closes his eyes for a nap on the way down.

"Oh this is very nice" Julius breathes in deep getting the fresh air deep in his lungs, the last time he had fresh air was on Reach 3 years ago. "Dad! Hey! HELLO!" Julius turns around quickly and sees Caroline standing waiting nearby "About time I see my own dad in the flesh not via a message that has been bounced around space off various relay stations, mum is at home making dinner, she is so happy to have you back, was a bit surprised to hear your ship is docked for the first time in what...5 years" "Yeah this war is a bitch that's why, I hate it, I want it to end but the Covenant wont bloody let up". Julius and Caroline drive quietly back to their family home, Julius admiring new parts of the city on the way that have popped up in the last 5 years, amazed that despite what is going on, people can still get on with their lives as if nothing was going on at all. The car pulls up the drive and Janet walks outside, Julius walks up and they embrace tightly, Janet has tears streaming down her face, tears of joy and relief that her husband has returned safe. "I missed you so much, we get news reports at the studio from the battles, I look for your ship before I give the report on tv and your never listed, I never know if thats a good sign or a bad one, I know it is all censored but..." "I am here now and I will tell you things later but first of all...damn I'm hungry and I'm sick and tired of ship food, don't get me wrong the chef is good but I miss your roasts" All 3 of them go inside to relax and have dinner and catch up on events, for the first time in 5 years, the family is almost all together.

The ground jumps as the roar of a explosion fills the air, dirt falls over the marines, another wraith has fired on their position, smoke fills the sky, the roar of gunfire hangs in the air and plasma rifles and pistols fire back in return, the battle is on Bates Ridge, Aeschylus IV a small planet that had a population of 100,000 mainly farmers, this planet provided food for the neighbouring systems including Ferros System but was evacuated 3 days ago when the Covenant first showed up, the 23rd Battle group is in orbit locked in battle while hundreds of marines and ODSs are on the ground trying to regain the city. Lucas Fraser ducks behind the remains of a stone wall that borders the remains of what was a small cottage on top of a hill on the outskirts of the city limits, dozens of needler rounds ping off the stone as another plasma round hits the ground, this time it was a direct hit on a group of marines taking cover behind a destroyed warthog, the marines and the warthog are vaporised in an instant, not a scream was ever made. "Shit" Lucas peeks around just in time to see his mates vanish from the war. A single tear falls in their memory as Lucas stands up and releases his entire clip into a group of incoming grunts, blue blood sprays all over and there is a loud explosion as a methane tank blows out sending a bullet riddle grunt sailing into the air like a toy rocket, more gunfire opens up as a small group of marines advance and take positions either side of Lucas, Tracy was one of them, his childhood friend and now fellow solder, Lucas knew she would have his back no matter what and she knew he will always have hers . This war was brutal and had cost lots of lives but here is Lucas, he is in the thick of it, just fresh out of boot and already has seen too much death, the vids at boot were

edited and did not show this much destruction and death. The wave of grunts is endless now, they throw themselves at the line of marines but never make it, a few elites join but are cut down, the street they are fighting on is at the top of a gentle sloping hill, downhill there is nothing but fresh mown grass and gardens - Imperial Park the number one park in the whole system, famed for its gardens and statues, now all is ruined and is bathed in the blood of the enemy. Broken ghosts lay upturned, and a lone wraith is slowly tracking the marines about to fire once more when suddenly the air and sky turn to fire and a loud thump hits the ground and fireball quickly rises out from the park, everything is on fire, so is the wraith, somebody must have called in a air strike on it.

A loud cheer rises up from the marines for this battle is over, a clear 2km path now lays open leading towards the city. Lucas looks up to the skyline, the scene is unbearable to see and is etched into his memory, buildings on fire and crumbling, there is a highway leading out to the west, dark smoke rises from destroyed vehicles that block the way in and out of the city, who knows who made that road block, perhaps desperate city law enforcement trying to block all possible routes in so the covenant will be slowed enough for defences to come in and stop them. A loud rumble makes everybody stop cheering, The Needle...a space elevator to the space station above starts to sway, metal and concrete rain down over the city as she begins to fall, loud twangs of reinforced steel line snapping can be heard from Imperial Park nearly 2km away. The rumble gets louder as the elevator gives way, the rumble appears to go on forever, buildings topple and fall as they get hit by pieces, the city is dying, the city is lost, Tracy collapses in tears while Lucas tries to hold her shaking body, other marines hold each other while others just curse and look away "Damned Covenant" a marine says. Finally the elevator stops falling, looks like it was severed in half in space.

The ground starts to shake and a dull droning noise turns into a deafening roar, the marines looks to the sound of the noise but before they can a shadow slides its way over them, "holy sh.." a marine covers his mouth. The noise is from the UNSC Mason, a small frigate descending, a radio crackles, "anybody ordered armour?". The frigate comes into land over the park, the down draft blows debris in all directions, the marines are still waiting on the hill in front of the park, watching as the cargo lift lowers brings down scorpion tanks and warthogs, more marines walk off the lift. A warthog revs up and speeds towards Lucas and the marines, "New orders marines, go to the Mason, you are going back to the fleet, I am staying here with this lot to mop up the remain scum, we have our own orders to make this park a new base of operations for other reasons, I regret to inform you this city is deemed a lost cause now that it is all but flattened" The officer pauses "The Needle, we needed it to transfer troops and supplies down but she was hit, the UNSC Havana was hit by plasma torpedo and was cut in half, her rear half hit the Needle and..." the officer looks over past the Mason towards the city and shakes his head.

The officer drives off to find more marines to bring back to the UNSC Mason as Lucas and his small group of marines make the trip down to the frigate, the newly arrived marines walking up just look at them and nod slowly to pay respect, Lucas returns the favour and just happens to look at the blue blood stained grass, he sees his boots caked in dirt and mud, now blue with blood, he looks at his pants and armour then his arms, he looks to his fellow marines, they all look

like him, covered in dirt, blood and any other crap imaginable, the other marines were not only nodding out or respect, they were nodding that they understood that only hours before hand, they were in hell.

UNSC Mason moves quietly through space, she has just unloaded her supplies and extra troops and is returning to the fleet with tired and worn out marines and odsts from the planet surface. Outside the remains of the needle float by still attached to the space station, both now no longer in stable orbit, they break up slowly sending debris through space, Mason moves around the Havana, spinning slowly, silently in space, her back half has been destroyed long ago with the impact on the needle, her front remains, a ghost in space, no signs of life left on board, she turns slightly to give people a glimps inside her as Mason slowly goes by, everybody can see in her, the rooms, corridors, a ship cut in half. A few life pods of managed to escape, but not all so some crew must have made it, unless the covenant has blasted them too like they always do.

The fleet above Aeschylus IV is now just 8 ships strong, all battered and scared, but all are still able to fight, they have moved out of range of a debris field that marks the spot of a few destroyed ships, human and covenant alike, all possible rescues have been completed, UNSC Mason joins them. Lucas makes his way from the showers and dresses in a fresh outfit and puts his armour back on. "Just like new" Lucas says quietly, his armour has been cleaned in the armoury and been bought back up to the mens washrooms, Lucas heads down to the mess hall to grab some food, he has not eaten for over 12 hours. "Hey Lucas" Lucas turns and sees Tracy seated, she holds up a tray "come and eat, I have your favorite here, sloppy meatloaf with something called...potato mash" Lucas heads over and takes a seat and begins to eat "just like home on our ship, same food same taste and same texture damn I cant wait to be home to have real food for a change" Tracy laughs "man up Lucas, this shit aint all that bad, try the food in hospital" Sirens blare out and everybody drops what they are holding and all rush up Lucas looks over to Tracy "Here we go again". "Battle stations battle stations incoming covenant ships" Captain Chandlers repeats over the intercom the status of the ship "mac cannon charging, all archer missile pods open and ready, release safeties on the shivas, looks like the covenant want round 2" Outside on the Mason all missile doors slide open revealing hundred of missiles all primed for use, the mac cannon opens, aimed to the front this is the Masons main weapon that has enough fire power to drill a tungsten slug through a covenant ship, all ships take up formation as in the distance dozens of bright flashes light up marking the entry of the covenant ships. "One ship, make that four no wait..." Captain Chandlers announces to the crew "18 covenant ships heading our way, all marines prepare to repel all boarding parties, lets kick some alien ass !"

Two fleets face each other, silent and not moving, the tension on board the UNSC Mason is at critical, Captain Chandlers can see the covenant fleet ahead, 9 ships against 18 "Mac at 100% sir and holding all weapons are primed and all firing solutions are locked in, sir ? who is going to fire first Captain Chandlers messages the fleet with a countdown, 50 seconds and counting down, the battle will begin. Along the sides of the covenant ships blue lines appear and travel along the hulls to their main weapons, they charge their main cannons, superheated plasma, boils away ship armour in a instant, this is their weapon which we have almost no defence against, the

count down hits 0 "FIRE" screams Captain Chandlers and the Mason bucks violently as her mac fires, 12 massive rounds tear through space faster than the speed of sound heading towards the lead covenant ships, all ships quickly start recharging their cannons as the rounds streak ahead, shields flash as the mac rounds hit, the shields are too strong and dont fall except for 2 ships that were targeted with 2 rounds each, their shields fail. "ADVANCE" shouts Captain Chandlers and the fleet moves forward as the covenant fires, plasma torpedos race from all ships towards the human fleet who start breaking off to avoid the incoming fire, Destroyer UNSC Defiance unto End fires some of her archer missiles and then her twin macs that just hit 100% charge her target is one of the 2 covenant ships with downed shields, 2 mac rounds streak ahead of her volley of missiles, the covenant ships start to advance on the incoming fleet. The covenant light cruiser Unknown Path gets hit with the 2 mac rounds fired from UNSC Defiance unto End, the rounds smash into the ship midsection and aft with such force that she is spun around, gaping holes show where the rounds entered, archer missiles detonate along her side blasting her sideways more, another covenant light cruiser tries to avoid but hits, that ones shields flash twice and overload letting the ship to rip into Unknown Path, a flash of bright blue light and both ships explode into a fireball, Unknown Paths engines went critical from the mac round that tore into the engine room and exploded, 2 ships gone from the battle, but still, many more remain. The plasma torpedos fired race out to the ships, the fleet manages to avoid most, but they soon turn and follow the ships, they are able to follow their target much like guided missiles do, UNSC Frigate Harper Jones Explodes in a nuclear fireball as she gets hit by 2 plasma torpedos, the shock wave rocks UNSC Mason as she fires another mac round and sends a volley of missiles towards the enemy ships, both fleets are so close now the covenant ships fill the entire bridge windows "firing archer pods 1A through to 10C sir", shouts one crew member, "incoming enemy fire yells another" "emergency thrusters" yells Captain Chandlers. The Mason suddenly jumps out the path of a torpedo and fires her mac once more, the round tears through another light cruiser, a huge explosion emerges from the other side of the ship as the round guts it right through, explosions rip through the hull, some covenant crew get sucked out from the decompressions into space, archer missiles explode on the hull doing even more damage, Mason races past already locked onto another target wanting another kill.

UNSC Oceania fires her emergency thrusters but there is nothing they can do, Captain Susan Jenkins wipes her brow and says a quick prayer for her crew as the plasma torpedo slams into her bridge melting away her and her bridge crew, the plasma boils its way into the ship and she explodes, the Oceania is now more, all hands lost.

Lucas runs down the hall with Tracy and a few other marines when suddenly the ship jumps sending everybody sailing into the air, there is a loud explosion and a roar of air, Mason has been hit. Lucas holds onto something that sticks out from the wall, he has no idea what it is but it is stopping him from getting sucked out with the rest of the marines, Tracy is holding his leg and screaming but he cant hear her when suddenly she looses her hold and she is gone. Lucas screams out but there is nothing he can do, his grip is loosing, he tries to hold but lets go and starts to be sucked down the hall when suddenly the blast door lowers and shuts, Lucas slides along the floor and impacts on the door with a sickening crunch, Lucas scream out loud as his arm has been snapped, he gets up and

starts to head to the medical bay when the ship lurches again, Lucas is swept off his feet and is knocked face first into the wall, he collapses onto the floor and lays there with blood pooling around him. "Impact impact" yells a crew member, Captain Chandler is thrown from his seat, the map of the Mason glows red in sections where the torpedos hit, "Damage report!" "weapons are failing, life support failing, engines failing" The ship AI Samuel starts rattling off a list of damage that seems to just go on, the Captain gets up and looks around his bridge, smoke fills the air and sparks and flames come out of computers, a fire crew is busy putting out the fires "how much charge in the mac" "78% sir we can fire but it won't do the damage we want it to do" "ammo situation" "sir...we have none, just a few missiles the shivas and 1 mac round in the chamber ready to go" Captain Mason looks out the bridge window, ships are burning, others are totally obliterated, 3 other ships remain against a wall of covenant ships "fire everything and get us the hell out of here" he signals the remaining ships "get out of here, we have lost"

UNSC Mason turns away from the wave of ships coming towards her, a cruiser that has been damaged bears down on her, pulse lasers firing, the ship shudders under the barrage from the cruiser, mac fires and the rest of the archers missiles are off, explosions rip through Mason as the ship turns away, the mac round tears through the cruiser as missiles impact her but not its not enough. The cruiser opens fire with her main plasma weapons, plasma torpedos rush towards the heavily damaged Mason. Lucas never awoke after his impact on the wall, he was lucky to have not been awake to see the ship he is on be ripped apart, marines, ship crew all melted away or sucked into the cold of space, he died unaware of his fate, some could say his death was unworthy while others say he served, fought and died in the name of humanity, he is another lost hero. In the end no ship returned to Ferros that day and Aeschylus IV was turned into glass.

She slowly moves through the debris, UNSC Starfire, a Oni stealth ship surveying the remains of battle in orbit around Aeschylus IV, currently hiding under the remains of UNSC Logan as a covenant scout drifts by, her crew study and take remains of ships from both sides, further knowledge in defence and weapons they say that can be used against the covenant, the crew hold their breath as the scout drifts past, must be looking for any survivors. As the scout continues on its path Starfire gently eases out from her hiding spot and moves slowly out of system, all systems are turned off, lights are off. everything, her hull is painted as dark as space, you won't know she is there watching. Starfire gets further away and powers up her slipspace engines and vanishes, and the covenant was none the wiser...

"...We at the office of the UNSC are sorry to report that your son Lucas Fraser died in battle at Aeschylus IV 4 days ago during battle against covenant troops, his body has not yet been recovered..."

There is a loud noise from the hall and a scream, sobs soon follow as Julius and Caroline rush out to see what was wrong, Janet is curled up on the hallway floor, a single letter lays down by her side watched quietly by 2 officers. The letter is the one every family dreads, the notice of a lost family member, Julius picks up Janet and takes her to the lounge as the officers come in, Caroline in tears reads the letter before storming off to her room slamming the door on the way. "we are very sorry for your loss" starts one officer

"he fought bravely with his mates and secured the city his team was sent to defend, by what little information we found, he was evacuated off planet by UNSC Mason but the covenant showed up again soon after, all ships engaged the enemy, but there was no survivors" "we are truly deeply sorry" added the second officer. Julius nods slowly, eyes red, Janet sobs uncontrollably, they lost their dear son, their friend.

"Julius you are needed back in the Raven, enemy movement detected not far away, you are instructed to patrol Ferros System while we send another battle group to you, after the fight at Aeschylus IV we have decided to send more ships out your way" Admiral Lord Hood explains to Julius about the threat that is near "I will join the Raven tonight, just let us have this afternoon to lay my son to rest for the last time" "Of course, and I am truly sorry about your loss" "Yes Sir" Julius ends the call and goes back into the family room to gather his bag "You have been recalled again" "Yes, after the funeral I need to get back, there is some movement in a neighbouring system, the fleet is being assembled with back up coming" "Oh god, here" Julius looks at Janet with sadness in his eyes and nods and shrugs his shoulders "We might be next, just need to sit back and wait and see and be ready for anything"

The funeral was a very emotional affair for all those who attended, speeches were given and flowers laid, Lucas had his name engraved on the war memorial in Stanford Cemetery for the Serving and an empty coffin was buried, not a dry eye was found that afternoon. After some emotional goodbyes and several hours Julius is walking the hall to the bridge alone, UNSC Raven is repaired and fully stocked, all her crew are ready for duty, Julius steps onto the bridge and all his officers salute him "welcome back everybody, we have a duty to perform, patrol Ferros System and look for any covenant activity, backup is on the way" He sits on his chair and Neptune pops up beside him "Welcome back Captain" Neptune greets Julius and bounces softly, she is a hologram of the planet Neptune, planet in Sol System where Earth is located, all AI's choose their body, reason why Neptune chose hers is anybody's guess. "Release docking clamps and ease us out". UNSC Raven slowly leaves orbit and starts her patrols.

It has been a long week, nothing of interest has occurred, no sign of the covenant either, all is quiet, Julius has been in his quarters for most of the week all the crew know he is mourning his son. "Captain you are needed on the bridge, we just got a urgent message from the UNSC Shadow, the captain said he has something large heading towards Ferros System" "Explain something and explain large" "Sir he said looks like the coordinates line up with Aeschylus IV" Julius's eyebrow raises "Is that so, we have no planet there now and no ships so there is only one possible answer" "Covenant sir?" "Alert Ferros and Battle Group Victor, they have found us, I will alert the Admiral, Battle Group Victor has engaged the covenant at Ferros" Alert sirens sound through the ship as crew rush to their posts, marines run to cover key areas of the ship ready to repel enemy boarders, Raven is racing through the system to catch up to the rest of the fleet, the estimated entry point the covenant would come through has been pinpointed and the all of Battle Group Victor are waiting. 38 ships backed up by 8 orbital mac platforms wait as in the distance sudden white flashes appear, covenant ships erupt out of slipspace "5 ships ... 19 ships" Neptune counts the ships as they enter normal space, Julius watches on with a look of utter pure hatred "43 ships ... wait make that 52 ships no more coming out of

slipspace, we have 52 enemy contacts on our doorstep, I am calculating firing solutions and done sir" "Send the firing solutions to the fleet we cant afford any screwups at this time and remember people, we have 8 orbital guns out there so when they say we in their way move us out their god-damn way we don't want a repeat of Jericho 9"

Battle Group Victor awaits in battle formation, frigates, cruisers, destroyers and a carrier, looming behind them is Ferros, a lush green and blue planet, home to billions, 8 orbital mac platforms await, Julius looks out to the dark of space "Home, I was born here, I started my own family here now I defend here" He walks over to his station "Open archer bay doors, arm the shivas, twin macs are ready, start the countdown- Bright yellow marked doors slide open on the top of Raven and down her sides, hundreds of missiles wait to be fired, the 2 mac cannons open ready. All down the fleet, all 38 ships do the same, archer missiles all ready and mac cannons primed, the carrier UNSC Huntress opens her bay doors ready to release her fighters and the countdown ticks down 0:25. The covenant ships wait in formation, the center is reserved the assault carrier that has opened her doors and glowing purple energy shields mark where the bays are 0:12, blue plasma lines spread over the ship hulls as their weapons charge, Julius looks out at the enemy "Today August 19th 2550, Battle Group Victor engages the covenant fleet over Ferros, only time will tell who has won" count down hits 0.

A bright yellow flash races past the bridge of UNSC Raven, 7 more flashes go past sailing through the fleet as the orbital cannons open fire, all 38 ships fire their mac rounds sending over 50 tungsten projectiles speeding through space faster than the speed of sound, then start recharging their weapons. The rounds from the orbital cannons reach their targets first, these rounds are larger and faster and pack a massive punch compared to their ship based counterparts, shields on 8 light cruisers flash once then fail and the mac rounds make it through, 8 ships are ripped in half sending flames out into the darkness of space. The covenant ships open fire, plasma torpedos race out towards the fleet, the space in between the two fleets look like hellfire as criss-crossing mac rounds and plasma meet and pass each other, mac rounds hit more covenant ships, some shields fail and more ships get punished, others remain untouched. UNSC Pure of Heart explodes as she gets hit, same happens for numerous other ships from Battle Group Victor, Raven gets grazed by debris "Advance and fire at will" Julius yells to the bridge crew, more flashes fly by as the orbital cannons fire again, Raven moves forward with the remaining ships and fires her 2 mac cannons again, shields flash as the mac rounds fired by the orbital defences hit their mark, one covenant cruiser get hit in her midsection, the round explodes out from the other side and continues before hitting the shields of the assault carrier. Swarms of Seraph fighters emerge from the carrier like bees from a nest that somebody just hit, UNSC Huntress responds to this new threat with her own Longsword fighters, soon there is a dogfight of a grand scale between the 2 fleets as they draw closer to each other firing relentlessly.

"Incoming enemy fighters sir!" "Activate point defences!" all the point defence systems on Raven open up and target all the enemy ships incoming, yellow streams appear all around as rounds tear through space hitting their targets, more ships open up with their point defences and soon space is filled with yellow streams thick and strong, more seraph fighters pour out of the assault carrier, Raven

fires a volley of missiles and her mags, as ships on both sides explode and die, the last stand of Ferros has begun.

Air raid sirens sound as Janet runs back to shelter with her news crew and some marines, the battle has been going on for a hour, and just now swarms of seraph fighters has started to come down and harass the city, anti aircraft guns have opened fire but there is just too many, they start swooping low on the civilians as they are all crowding around bomb shelters, cars and buses explode as they take fire, there is so much screaming, "The ships, they are everywhere!" Janet is yelling down her mic in a frightened but informative voice, the chatter of a chaingun on a worthog drowns out her voice and suddenly a seraph fighter crashes into the national back on 117th street. "If the ships are here it means our defence perimeter has been breached!" more explosions as buildings explode out over frightened people, local police are telling people to find cover in the subway tunnels, suddenly there is a roar and longsword fighters swoop over the city, Hindlers Naval Base a hour away has joined the fight, all their longswords are deployed and are taking on the covenant fighters over the city. The camera man moves his camera up and catches views nobody will ever forget, a large ship is coming down over the city, a covenant cruiser has arrived.

UNSC Raven fires her mags and a cruiser is gutted, explosions rip along the ships side as explosive decompressions run riot through the ship, enemy troops are sucked out into space, 32 covenant ships remain against 18 from victor fleet, 6 orbital cannons still fire but two have been lost leaving a hole open for the covenant ships to get through, one has made it while another three has been destroyed while trying to slip past "Sir, covenant destroyer coming about towards us, they are ready to fire" "Turn us about and engage that ship, they will not pass us and make it planet side" the covenant ship fires at the same time as the Raven does, the mag rounds hit and punch holes through the ship "Emergency Thrusters Now" Raven suddenly explodes out the way of the plasma torpedos and they miss but now it leaves both ships opposite but to the side of each other. "Sir they going to pass us" "No they wont, get ready to fire all archer pods on starboard side at the destroyer as she passes, get all point defences ready as well, Neptune you having fun with point defence, aim anywhere and everywhere all over the ship taking out their pulse lasers if you can, get a shiva ready, we going to broadside them" "Alert all hands, evacuate all outer levels on the starboard side, decompression starts in sixty seconds" "What you doing sir" "Sacrificing our starboard side" A minute later "All complete sir and we almost upon them" "All hands brace for multiple impacts, we are going in!" Julius sits in is seat restrained as the Raven pulls along side the covenant destroyer Everlasting Prayer. The space between the two ships suddenly is full of pulse laser fire and archer missiles mixed with point defence fire, explosions pound the Raven and Everlasting Prayer as both ships fire a endless barrage at each other, inside the Raven the crew are getting tossed around and computer consoles blow out, while inside the Everlasting Prayer their troops are getting tossed about while the firing continues. A huge blue fountain of fire blows out from the hanger deck into space from Everlasting Prayer "Shiva away" Shouts Neptune. Some of the fuel tanks in the hanger bay have taken a hit, there is a hole where one of the bay doors should be and now fighter ships and some troops have been sucked out by the decompression but as they go out one object goes streaking in, a shiva warhead with a time delay rockets into the ship and smashes its way through some rooms before laying in the

center of the ship, it is all dented and cracked but still counting down, some grunts walk up scared and kick it. "Get us away from here, shiva is in the enemy ship!" UNSC Raven accelerates away from Everlasting Prayer as she turns slowly onside on fire and holed in hundreds of places. Raven has thousands of holes all her starboard side but no major damage or injures because that side was already evacuated and decompressed. Raven picks up speed getting further away from Everlasting Prayer, there is now more grunts and elites poking and kicking the warhead, they think it is a dud, just a missile that did not blow...until a elite lifts a flap and sees the counter 0:01, the elite starts to howl his last howl but is cut short. There is a blinding flash in space and the Everlasting Prayer is gone forever, the shock wave races out to the Raven but slowly dies out. "Damage report" Julius looks at his ship on the map display, the entire starboard side flashes red "Sir I will read you the report on what is working on that side" Neptune begins to recite the very short list.

Janet ducks as a plasma bolts flies past her, the chatter of the chaingun goes on as the gunner hoses bullets down the road, the warthog races down the road to the checkpoint the marines setup in a warehouse, Janet screams as the warthog tips on 2 wheels as the fly around the corner, the driver has full control and quickly all four wheels on the ground, more plasma bolts follow them as a ghost fires, bullets penetrate its armour and next second it explodes sending the grunt pilot catapulting onto the road where it and vanishes in a cloud of blue blood and a stream of bullets. They turn another corner and suddenly find themselves in a fire fight, covenant troops have cornered dozens of civilians and marines and both sides are trading weapons fire, the gunner on the warthog opens fire again and grunts turn into blue meat, a elite throws a plasma grenade but nobody saw it till it was too late, the grenade bounces off a wall and attaches itself to a young man hiding behind a car, he scream widely and tries to pull it off, a marine screams out and pushes the man out of cover into the open, the young man tries to run while scratching at the grenade but its no use, a bright blue flash and the grenade explodes. The elite starts laughing and fires more shots unaware that his life is now at a end, the warthog revs loud and hits the elite snapping its back as it gets sucked under the wheels. The driver pulls over to the survivors as a little boy screams "Daddy Daddy" a little boy no older than 4 clutches a dirty bear, a lady lays next to him with two needler rounds sticking out her, a marine is covering her face with a scrap piece of cloth. "The hog is over crowed, we cant take you all" "Get out of here" says another marine who has just showed up, "We already have a way out back to the warehouse" Janet's camera man is taking a close up shot of the boy, tears streaming down his face, "Mummy wake up...Daddy" The boy looks around at everybody "Tears fall from Janet and her cameraman as the warthog starts to drive away, Janet turns in time to see another 2 warthogs come around the corner to get the surviving civilians and marines. "too much, this is all too much" The driver slows as they get close to the warehouse, dead bodies lay everywhere, marines, covenant, civilians the sight is unbearable, Janet starts to cry again despite the scenes being beamed live around the planet for all to see. "The bloody covenant have taken the upper quarter, the lower is being taken, we need reinforcements!" a Sargent is screaming down the radio to a voice that Janet can tell is scared and frozen under the pressure "Yes sir, I understand sir, I am requesting backup to be dropped at your location "Just do it son!" the Sargent throws the radio at the wall and picks up his assault rifle and runs out nearly knocking Janet

over "Oi I know you" the Sargent has stopped and looks over at Janet and her crew "What the hell are you doing here, looking to get killed" "We were with a squad, most are dead, we got a lift here for safety" "Sir we have message, UNSC Shadow sir, in orbit flying low, helljumpers enroute" a radio operator is talking to somebody over another radio " How many?" "A hundred or so" Janet looks up, the cruiser is above the city to the west, smoke trials erupt in the sky as dozens of glowing lights fall.

Screams from the civilians in the checkpoint reach outside as screams from falling helljumper pods continue, the rattle of assault rifles and sub machine guns is endless, covenant troops have made their way to the warehouse, lots of them, grunts and elites, the jackles with their shield, Janet is again behind cover with her camera man "We are at a old warehouse in the industrial district, there is covenant all over, I will keep reporting this to you for as long as we can, the helljumpers have landed and kicking some serious ass" There is a loud explosion and screams, Janet looks around to see a marine clutching his shoulder...what is left of his shoulder, he was caught in a plasma grenade explosion and his arm has been blown off, a medic calls out and runs to his aid, a warthog comes speeding over to provide cover, the chain gun glowing red and still firing at a few grunts and elites. There is a low rumble that shakes the ground and the civilians start screaming again, the cruiser is turning around in their direction "Oh my god, the ship its turning, something is happening, it looks like it is coming this way" Janet is pointing at the cruiser as the camera is aimed at it, the last remaining covenant troops retreat under a hail of bullets. The ship is now over the heart of the city over 4km away, a bright purple light flashes out and turns into a continuous beam, a huge explosion that moves the ground can be heard and buildings instantly go up in flames and begin to bend and topple, survivors run screaming for their lives along with any marines still in the city center but none make it out, the ship moves slowly with the beam cutting a scar through the city towards the checkpoint, building in the path all blow out and catch fire and melt from the intense heat of the superheated plasma beam. "Help us please, we have survivors at the corner of..." Janet is crying into the camera begging for help from anybody who is watching, the ship gets closer and the air is getting hotter, marines are quickly getting out the civilians out into any vehicle they can fit into "Please hear me, Janet Fraser, reporter for Channel 12 news, we are under attack, we have lost thouands here today, there is a ship comingâ€¦..." The ship is moving overhead, more buildings melt and fall, Janet starts to run with her crew and the others, everybody just starts to run as the ship passes overhead, the roar of the beam and the explosions is deafening, the camera is trained on the ship and keeps filming. Janet screams as she beings to burn, the camera catches everything and broadcasts it far and wide to every city and home on Ferros, the ships in orbit get the footage on their monitors, Julius is staring, shaking, crying as his home burns his beloved wife is dying before his eyes, the bridge crew keep firing the Ravens weapons but Julius takes no notice, the screen goes fuzzy as the screams continues, the camera is on the road, laying sideways as fire consumes everything and the screen goes dark, Julius screams echo down the hall as he collapses on the floor in anger and pain, and complete helplessness. Neptune looks down at him and changes her form into the most prettiest image a AI will ever choose "Sir, there was nothing we could do, we could not reach her in time, we, your crew, we are sorry for you, we truly are but we need you right now, please lead us, make her proud, Julius looks up at Neptune "Pick a target I

want to send it to the hell that which it came from"

The assault carrier looms in front on UNSC Raven as she is weaving in between shattered ships, a mac round slams into the carrier fired from one of the 3 last orbital cannons, the carrier has been holed four times and half her weapons are destroyed but she is still firing, UNSC Shadow explodes as she gets ripped in half, 11 ships left "What is our ammo like" Julius asks Neptune "we are out sir, no mac rounds left, all archer pods empty, point defences out as well, we have 2 shivas left though" Julius sighs deeply and grips his shattered console "Why is the carrier staying there, she wont come to the party, she stays away till we get within range" "maybe...there is somebody onboard, who needs to be protected as they observe" Julius thinks for a moment "there is a prophet on that ship, they give orders to the fleet and they watch the results and they just love to flaunt their power by hitching rides in near indestructible ships" "that is highly probable sir I been picking up all kinds of transmissions since the battle started all coming from that ship" the communications officer replies. Julius sends out messages to the remaining ships "Damn, nobody has enough ammo left to take her out, we need something big and powerful" Julius just happens to glance at the floor and sees Janet's image in the dust and bits of broken console, a tear comes to his eye as he realises what he must do, he slowly stand up "contact all ships and orbital cannons, fire another volley of macs at the carrier" Julius lowers his voice "Raven will ram her at speed, detonate our fusion drive and the shivas" The bridge crew all look up at him in silence "Is there any objections" all is quiet, nobody makes a sound until one, a young lieutenant speaks up "i am new to this crew, I am still getting to know you all, Sir, you are a inspiration to us all and to me, I will follow you to the ends of the galaxy just to win this fight and I am sure everybody else thinks the same" the bridge crew start to clap and cheer at the speech "So be it, I will inform the crew and the fleet"

Pulse lasers fire as Raven rushes by a light cruiser, she is flanked 10 remaining ships but none take a shot at the cruiser, all are targeting the carrier that is now turning to face them side on, pulse lasers take aim, 3 macs rounds impact the side as pulse lasers open fire on the ships, explosions rip through the ship sending blue flames and covenant into the darkness of space, all ships except Raven fire and begin to turn away and begin firing the last of their missiles on the other covenant ships "Janet, Lucas, Caroline, I am so proud to have been your husband and father, I am sorry I failed you and could have been there in your final moments but soon, very soon we will be together once again, I need to finish this fight at all costs so more don't die" Julius looks out the bridge at the carrier, Raven shudders as she gets hit by pulse lasers. Everybody on board is praying or singing, writing letters that will never be sent. "Brace for impact, overload the reactor, release safeties on the shivas" Julius stands defiant as Raven gets closer and speeds up, on board the carrier the minor prophet is ordering all ships to defend him but they cant get to him in time, the carrier has been hit so many times and is falling apart, the prophet knows the ship cant handle being rammed, he knows he is doomed. Julies sheds his last tears and screams as Raven makes contact, both hulls smash and shatter as Raven plows into the carrier, explosions rip through both and the Raven keeps going, the bridge is vaporised and Julius keeps his word in his prayer, Raven stops, her rear half is sticking out of the carrier, the impact has knocked the carrier out of her stationary position and is now tumbling, over and over, her fusion drives go critical and

explode into a nuclear fireball, not even a millisecond later twin explosions occur as the shivas go off, the carrier is decimated. The remaining covenant start to retreat and head out of system, the fleet dont give chase, they have no ammo left, instead they fall back to the orbital cannons, one of which turns slowly and tracks a crusier, the one leaving Ferros after causing so much damage and wiping out a city, a mac round streaks out cutting the crusier in half.

Saint Chamberlands Hospital stands blackened from the heat of the beam weapon along with a few other buildings, the hospital is on the otherside side of the city center so was not hit by the ships weapon, Caroline Fraser steps out and takes a look around, the city, is almost all in ruins, ships fly around, marines checking the dead, a officer walks upto her with a few marines "are you Caroline Fraser daughter of Julius Fraser" "Yes he is my father, why you want to know" they start walking up a path to a small garden that overlooks the now black scar that runs through the city "He saved us all, but... it came at a cost" Caroline looks at the scar "He is dead" "His ship, he rammed the ship that led the battle, he detonated his reactor and nuclear warheads, he saved us all" Caroline begins to cry but smiles "He always wanted to go out with a bang, he always joked about it" Caroline walks off back to the hospital where she can help the injured, like she has always done.

Ferros was attacked again 6 months later by covenant forces, they made landfall once more in all major cities across Ferros, billions lost, 10000 survivors in less than 20 civilian ships made it out alive

Caroline looks out the window as Reach comes into view, she is one of the survivors of a lost world, her only possessions are the clothes on her back and a small bag containing her identification, a book and her most treasured possession, a picture, Janet, Julius, Lucas and Caroline at the beach, Caroline looks at the picture and a tear falls "I miss you so much and I am proud, Reach is my home now, I will start my own family and tell them about you, we will never forget you, we will never forget Ferros"

End
file.